2:Seligman & Seligman E-5 (1909-1910) 1932
FJ23 Shilluk FJ23



1 2

3 4 5

Shilluk types. No. 1 average, 2 aristocratic, 4 " Negroid," 5 woman (unusually broad-faced)

[face p. 38

2:Seligman & Seligman E-5 (1909-1910) 1932
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the Shilluk nation. As Nyakang passed northwards along the river he incorporated the inhabitants; moreover, he had magic, and so where men were lacking he turned hippopotami and other animals into human form to become his subjects.[1]

The Shilluk, though generally tall and long-headed, seem to us to vary more among themselves than any of the riverain tribes of which we have first-hand knowledge, for while the subject (No. 1) figured on Pl. III may be taken to represent an average Shilluk youth (style of head-dress now unfashionable), a long-faced, straight-nosed and thin-lipped type, as shown in its extreme form in No. 2 is by no means uncommon, as also the handsome if somewhat fierce type shown in No. 3; there is, too, a rare, exaggeratedly negroid, type (No. 4), but this can hardly be accepted as truly Shilluk without prolonged genealogical research. Such wide variation can be best explained by assuming that Nyakang and his followers represented a stock carrying more Hamitic blood than the inhabitants of the riverain villages and other stocks who united with them, and we have no doubt that so far as the Nilotes are concerned even at the present day the maximum of Hamitic blood is to be found among the Shilluk, who, with the exception of the Azande, are the best organized people in the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, and who of all the black tribes offered the most determined opposition to the Khalifa and his followers.

The wealth and social position of the Shilluk are estimated in cattle; sheep and goats are kept, but these are not regarded in the same, almost sacred, light as cows. Milking is done by boys and old men, women not being allowed to milk. In every village there is a number of cattle byres, such as those shown on Pl. V, but except

[1] A number of Westermann's texts (*The Shilluk People*, Phil., 1912) refer to groups of the earlier inhabitants absorbed into the Shilluk nation by Nyakang, including turtle-men (op. cit., p. 169) and some mysterious river people (pp. xlv, 164–5). One of the first stories that the inquirer into the wanderings of Nyakang will hear is that of Obog or Obogi, who allowed himself to be sacrificed in order that Nyakang might pass across a river blocked with vegetation. The tale, given here in Westermann's version (op. cit., p. 165), constitutes a convenient starting-point for inquiries into the route taken by Nyakang:—

"When Nyikang came, he went to the Khor Anilfi, with his followers; he found the river was shut up by the *sudd*, so that Nyikang did not find a passage. And a certain man who was an albino asked them, 'Nyikang, why do you stop? Is it because you do not find a passage?' He replied, 'Yes, I do not see a way where to pass.' The man said, 'When I have finished eating, I shall come, I will be killed with a spear, my blood will flow into the river, and the *sudd* will break away.' And Nyikang speared the man, his blood flowed into the river, and the *sudd* broke away. Thus Nyikang found a passage."

Nothing definite can be said as to the date of Nyakang. Hofmayr (op. cit., 64) thinks that Ocolo, the fifth king of the genealogy, is the first historic king, and dates his reign 1600–35. Presumably this is reached by reckoning backwards; it is a reasonable estimate, giving an average reign of about 15 years, and allowing thirty to a generation.

The racial difference may be fully understood and explained by Shilluk mythology. Nyikang, the demigod and the Shilluk culture hero, came, with his followers, to the southern part of present Shillukland and erected his headquarters at Nyilual, in Panyang district. When he proceeded northward to extend his boundary and to found his kingdom, he found the lands on either side of the Nile already inhabited. The aboriginal people are said to have been Nuba and Bung, or according to one authority (9) Dongolawye or Berabra. It seems to me that the Bungs were not really the inhabitants of the land, but were reasonably they were subduing the country, especially the part of it which lies on the right bank of the Nile. At any rate, Nykang conquered the present Shillukland in a peaceful way sometimes, and by means of force in in those instances where people showed resistance. The people either fled to the Nuba mountains and Sennar, or stayed in the land. Those who stayed were not reduced to slaves, but were accepted as Shilluk citizens and thus incorporated into the Shilluk nation.

Now the high cephalic index in the north may be attributed to a Nuba influence, more specifically to an eastern Nuba influence, or to a mesaticephalic influence from the Dar Fung Hills.

There is no other nearby area of mesaticephals than the eastern Nuba Hills. The next nearest area of mesaticephals is the Dar Fung mountains which lie within a range of between 200 to 400 kilometers northeast of the Shilluk land across the Nile. Here first are some anthropometric measurements from both mesaticephalic areas:

| | C.I. | N.I. | F.I. | U.F.I. | S.(cm) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Nuba Hills: (10) | | | | | |
| Togolo (7) | 79 | 103 | 76.5 | 44.5 | |
| Ilyry & Lafofa(32) | 76.42 | 92.26 | 82.26 | 46.19 | 173.82 |
| Lemon (8) | 78.88 | 95.63 | | | |
| Tira-ol Akhdar, Mandi, Kandrumo | | | | | |
| Khomr (7) | 77.75 | 92.37 | 82.42 | 45.55 | 169.8 |
| Nuba women (11) | 76.30 | 94.03 | 83.48 | 48.23 | 157.2 |
| Ilyry (10) | 75.15 | 94.4 | | | |
| Dar Fung Hills: (11) | | | | | |
| Fung (5) | 74.6 | 83.3 | 84.9 | 46.5 | 170 |
| Ingassana (12) | 73.1 | 90.4 | 82.8 | 44.3 | 173 |
| Khoma (7) | 73.4 | 96.3 | 82.0 | 45.9 | |
| Uduk (9) | 77.4 | 97.0 | 77.9 | 43.7 | 167 |
| Burun (30) | 75.2 | 101.5 | 83.1 | 44.4 | 170 |
| Jum Jum (17) | 75.5 | | | | |
| Maban (43) | 79.1 | 96.0 | 84.0 | 47.0 | 176 |

Hypothetically we can say that these two areas in the past formed a mesaticephalic belt, now separated through the migration of the dolicophalic Dinka of the White Nile, on the eastern bank, and the Shilluk and Baggara Arabs on the western bank of the Nile.

Both areas, within themselves, do not form racial unities, but are more or less refuge areas. Thus they are merely conglomerations of different physical and cultural types which have fled from the plains in front of any conquest. But the most important feature that combines them ( not politically, but from our scientific standpoint) is their mesaticephalic character.

144 174 Now it is impossible to suggest that all people fled to the hills because of an instance of superior invasion; some will naturally stay in their land and will incorporate with the new-comers. At first they may well form a caste , they may also be reduced to slavery, but through the factor of time intermarriage will occur, and the conquerors and conquered will fuse into a harmonious unit. This process depends upon the policy followed by the conquerors; it will be allowed to develop if the conquerors accept the aboriginos in the frame of their society. The negative picture will result if the invaders insist upon wholly exterminating the aboriginals. Many factors define the policy of the invaders, but the most important is the numerical factor. If it is a big migrational wave, then there is no question of peaceful incorporation and amalgamation, and if they form a minor wandering wave, they will be keen on the amalgamation **policy** . The latter case was that which we can deduce from the Shilluk legend. They were so keen upon populating the country that they tell us that Nyikang, through his supernatural powers and the help of Dak, his son, caught mysterious people from the river, and changed animals into men to make them their subjects and to incorporate them into their nation.

If this was the case, then we should be able to say that the present Shillukland, before the coming of the Shilluk of Nyikang, was populated by at least a mesticephalic group in the north and a dolicephalic group in the south, culturally and perhaps politically separated. The longheaded group may be the racial substratum of the whole area of the Kilotes of the Sudan.

141 174 3. The further heterogeneity of the Shilluk, which table "D" reveals, is quite understandable. The Shilluk legends and myths tell us that the founder of the nation and his followers came from a far country near "Nam Doun" which means a broad and big river, a lake, a salt sea or a lake shore.

The physical qualities of the royal family members, as shown in table "D", do not give any clue to the real origin of this migration, because these qualities are shared by most of the inhabitants of the bigger area around the Shillukland. Long-headedness is nearly universal in Africa. The tendency to broadness is rare and may be attributed to Armenian (Alpine) influence in the northern half of the continent and to Pigmy influence in the central parts. From other evidences such as their legends and the legends of other Shilluk-speaking tribes, as well as other circumstancial evidences we can speculate on the original home of the Shilluk. Many theories have been introduced to account for the origin of the Shilluk, but here is not the right place to discuss this controversial problem.

4. In table "E" we see further disharmony. The tendency to a higher cephalic index is readily explained if we understand the Shilluk social institutions. The kings marry commoners according to the law of exogamy which is prevalent among the Shilluk. Later on, when the wives of the king are pregnant, they are sent to their villages to give birth.The royal babies are never born in Fashoda , and they stay in the village of their birth under the protection and guidance of the village chief.

We can conclude that the racial heterogeneity of the Shilluk is not simple. Three factors play a role in the ethnic composition of this nation and like many other nations, these different elements are fused into a social and cultural unit.

121 To begin with, we just need a quick resumé of the historical background, supplied, as is always the case, in mythological terms, of both components of our subject. Who are the Shilluk, and who were the Fung?

B) The SHILLUK :

131 The Shilluk now are a negroid tribe that occupies mainly the west bank of the White Nile from about Kaka to Tonga - a distance of about 250 km, and extends inland from the river to about 30 to 50 km. They also occupy the lower reaches of the Sobat river and a pocket around the town of Malakal on the eastern banks of the White Nile.

141 The physical characters of the Shilluk are surely negroid but they are not Negros. Anthropometric results indicate
144 that they are a tall ethnic group, dolichocephalic and platyrrhine. 8) But within the tribe anthropometrical data also reveals two distinct racial components: the royal family and the common Shilluk, the former being taller and more dolichocephalic. 9) Further, heterogeneity was also detected between the northern part of the Shilluk-land and the Southern part, with higher statures and higher cephalic index figures in the north. 10)

144 This compound heterogeneity has its backing in the
M3 Shilluk tradition. The national hero, semi-God, and first king of the Shilluk, Nyikang, led his family on a long march which was divided into two periods of wandering, and gathering adherents and followers from everywhere, and without discrimination, arrived in the present Shilluk land. The stock of wanderers was definitely alien to the peoples who were inhabiting the land, and whom we may call aboriginals of the Shilluk land. Nyikang incorporated part of these aboriginals in his new kingdom; the other part probably fled from the country to the nearest area that provided refuge, and this must have been the eastern Nuba Mountains, to the west of the present Shilluk country. It is naturally expected that after such an event -the coming of a new stock, yielding power in their hands- a caste system would be introduced to the country; the new-comers are now the elite of the country. Titles of nobility are held to the fourth generation. 11) Descendants after the fourth generation are also respected.

144 The racial differences between north and south within the
685 Shilluk country is backed by the fact that the country is politically divided in two provinces, opposed to each other to the degree

8) Seligman, p.13, and p. 38. Also Rind, pp. 71-76

9) Rind, pp. 71-76

10) Rind, pp. 71-76

11) Seligman, p. 49.

of open war in certain cases of Shilluk history. The country is further divided in two religious provinces corresponding to the political provinces, also opposed to each other in certain crucial times such as the event of electing a new king.

The questions now arise: From where did Nyikang stem, and to which racial and cultural area did he (and the first wanderers of his own family) belong? and when?

The only detectable physical description relating to Nyikang which I was able to find during my fieldwork among the Shilluk was that Nyikang was a man of medium stature, and of a (relatively) fair complexion. Relevant to this point is that the effigy of Nyikang kept at his shrine at Akurwa is relatively shorter than that of Dak, son of Nyikang. If the complexion was really fair, and there is every possibility that this might be so, then Nyikang's original race typology must have at least a primary degree of Hamito-negro's mixture if they are not pure Hamitic. 18) It follows then that any effort to pursue Nyikang to his original homeland must be directed to either:

a) the Hamitic homeland among the present Nilotic enclave, or

b) the area of possible hybrid on the marginal Hamitic bases, again around this Nilotic enclave.

In other words, the possible home of Nyikang is either to the North or to the East, i.e. Northern Sudan or the Abyssinian plateau, with their marginal areas of race mixture.

From the cultural point of view, there are two possibilities detectable from the Shilluk mythology, though contradictory:

A) Nyikang was born in a place where real kingship was known, with a system of electing kings. The electors seemed to be the chiefs and the officers of the country, and it appeared that there was no hope for any candidate to put his claims into effect by means of force, if this electoral council turned him down. Another evidence of this real kingship is found in the presence of a stool, the symbol of the throne. A stool in those parts of the Sudan was originally a representation of "the prerogatives of the great, and often only of the king, and as a sign of authority". 19)

B) The original home of Nyikang represented a nomadic cultural type, because agriculture was not known. The tradition tells that the brother of Nyikang who was elected king, threw a sort of digging stick, used for digging graves, towards Nyikang when he left the country. This meant that Nyikang and his followers would perish. But Nyikang, when he settled in the present Shilluk country, used the stick as an agricultural implement.

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18) It may be also an Arab-Negro mixture, because at that time the Arabs were already on the Bahr el Ghazal borders. My informants told me that Nyikang met the Rezeigat Baggara Arabs in his second period of wandering.

19) Arkell, (A), p. 327.